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ABSTRACT

A number of scholars have found that wartime conditions often bring about conflict between the press and the military. This study documents the various incidents between the United States Army and various Mexican and United States newspaper editors that led to at least ten cases of newspaper suppression, the occasional use of prior censorship, and other forms of press harrassment. Overall, the United States press enjoyed a wide latitude of freedom in its coverage of the Mexican War, but this freedom was not absolute. The energy of the United States press in covering the war was to influence future war coverage, but the Army's implementation of martial law served as a counterforce to that coverage, setting a precedent for press coverage of the United States military in future wars. (Author/RL)

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NEWSPAPER SUPPRESSION

DURING THE MEXICAN WAR, 1846-1848

Presented to
The Association for Education in Journalism
History Division
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The story of military censorship during the Civil War is well known,[1] but little has been written about military interference with the press during the preceding Mexican War.[2] This conflict, 1846-48, was the first foreign war reported extensively by American correspondents.[3] Daily newspapers provided organized coverage of the American expeditionary forces and made expensive, elaborate arrangements to have the news carried back to the United States. Also important to the war's coverage, a large number of American civilians followed in the wake of the army and established "war newspapers" in Mexico. Before the conflict was over enterprising American printers established 25 such publications in 14 occupied cities.[4] Serving both the troops at the front and the public at home, these papers provided much of the war's coverage. A third important source of war news was Mexican newspapers -- some of which attempted to keep publishing even in the American-occupied territory.

A number of scholars have found that wartime conditions often bring about conflict between the press and the military.[5] This proved to be the case in the Mexican War, as well. For a considerable time during the war large areas of Mexico had to be occupied by American troops, many of them poorly trained volunteers. Undermanned and spread thin over hundreds of miles, the rear area troops often were harassed by guerrilla forces and hostile civilian populations. In many instances order was maintained only through the strict use of martial law.[6]

The American military did not have martial law regulations prior to the Mexican War, but the necessity of conducting extensive operations beyond the country's national boundaries brought them into existence.[7] The first American army into Mexico, led by General Zachary Taylor, lacked a civil affairs policy

and as a result left behind it a long record of atrocities, including robbery, murder and rape.[8]

General Winfield Scott, who led the second and major American expeditionary force into central Mexico, learned from Taylor's mistakes and devised the first set of rules giving American military commanders proper legal authority when operating in captured foreign territory.[9] Although the martial law regulations were controversial with the Polk Administration and the Congress, Scott believed them essential to conducting a successful campaign in Mexico and took the initiative to implement them.[10] In brief, the guidelines gave a theater commander complete authority over civilian as well as military affairs. The regulations spelled out offenses, provided for punishment of offenders, whether civilian or military, American or Mexican, and allowed the establishment of local military commissions to enforce the policy. As Scott had surmised, his martial law regulations were a critical factor in conducting his small army through its decisive military campaign and subsequent occupation of Mexican territory.[11]

For the press, however, Scott's precedent-setting regulations provided no protection. As a result, strained conditions between the army and various Mexican and American editors led to at least ten cases of newspaper suppression, the occasional use of prior censorship and other forms of press harassment. In the same manner it found martial law effective in controlling civilian populations in general. the army found these broad, vague powers a useful tool to silence newspaper critics. This study briefly documents the various incidents which occurred between the press and the army during the Mexican War, and discusses the types of restraint involved.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Several small newspapers at Matamoros in northern Mexico were the first to be closed by the military authorities. The incidents occurred during summer, 1846 while General Taylor made Matamoros his headquarters. When the Americans first took possession of the town Taylor issued a proclamation to the Mexican citizens regarding "their tyrants in government." It read in part, "These tyrants fear the example of (American) free institutions... Already they have abolished freedom of the Press as the first step toward the introduction of (a) Monarchy...."[12] Events, however, soon indicated Taylor could not support his own words.

A Spanish-language paper, El Liberal, violently anti-American in tone, began publication in the town soon after the American occupation. El Liberal was so outspoken against the "barbarians from the north" that American papers marveled at it. It was "proof of the respect of our people for the liberty of the press," the New Orleans Courier commented.[13] The New Orleans Picayune suggested Mexican editors should use the example of El Liberal being started behind American lines "in their denunciations of the tyrannical law" gagging them in their own country.[14] The Charleston Courier said the presence of the Mexican paper "shows in the strongest light (our) determination to be exceedingly tolerant and liberal towards (the conquered)."[15] The American military authorities did not share these views, however, and after one issue El Liberal was closed by Taylor.[16]

Another Matamoros paper which troubled General Taylor was the American-owned Republic of the Rio Grande. Operators of the paper were Isaac Neville Fleeson, a New Orleans printer, William G. Dryden, a Texan active in expansionist movements, and Hugh McLeod, a Texas land promoter.[17] McLeod, in particular, hoped the four northern states of Mexico would revolt and form an independent republic and possibly annex to the United States (much in the manner of Texas). Editorials in the paper urged Mexican citizens in the surrounding area to rise up and overthrow the Mexican military government. The aggressive tone of the paper soon earned the Polk Administration's displeasure, and Taylor was ordered to close the publication "because the government does not agree with its object of a revolution in North Mexico."[18]

Fleeson soon was allowed to reorganize and restart the paper as the American Flag. The Flag denied reports in New Orleans newspapers that Taylor had insisted on the changes, stating the general "never interfered with us in the publication of our paper or suggested a change in either the name or tone."[19] The changes were made, nevertheless, and John Peoples, a printer-turned-army volunteer who played a major role in the press coverage of the war, temporarily joined Fleeson in running the publication. Another Flag editorial admitted, "It was intimated some time ago the name was disliked at headquarters....Not feeling ourselves altogether qualified to work out a Republic on the Rio Grande, and further the object of our 'illustrious predecessor,' we have pulled down the colors of the Republic of the Rio Grande and hoisted in their place the AMERICAN FLAG."[20] After its shaky start, the Flag went on to be the longest running of the war papers, surviving to the end of the conflict in July, 1848.[21]

Another American newspaper started in the town was the small, four-page Matamoros Reveille. It was operated by two Texas printers, Samuel Bangs and Gideon Lewis. The bilingual Reveille had three pages printed in English and a fourth page printed in Spanish. The latter actually was a separate newspaper, La Diana de Matamoros, run by a Mexican editor from the same shop as the Reveille.[22]

It was the Spanish-language section which caused the problems for the Reveille. While Bangs and Lewis were supporting the American cause, the Mexican editor was criticizing the Americans in his portion of the paper. Taylor, using a loose definition of his War Department orders, moved quickly to shut down the entire print shop, banning the Reveille as well.[23] Only after the two Texans were able to convince Taylor they had neither written nor published the attack did the general allow the publication to resume -- but without La Diana de Matamoros.[24]

Within a few days Taylor again closed the Reveille, placing a guard at the shop's front door. A correspondent of the New Orleans Bee reported, "Lewis wrote an article against the officer who arrested him a few days ago and it was considered so abusive by General Taylor that he shut them up." The correspondent said Bangs and Lewis had earlier asked Taylor to protect them under "military law, but he refused, saying the Alcalde of the town must protect them." Paradoxically, the military ignored the civil government and closed the paper twice, the Bee noted, adding, "there is a lack of consistency in this and it does not at all coincide with the General's proclamation to the Mexicans in which he preaches up so strongly the liberty of the press." Taylor gave Bangs and Lewis permission to move their press back to American territory, but kept the shop guarded until they departed.[25]

There was little press comment in the States regarding Taylor's action, and what there was supported him. The Baltimore Sun stated:

> In judging this matter we must not view it as a restriction of the 'liberty of the press' -- it is a restriction of the press from an abuse of privilege. There is no such thing as liberty of the press in Matamoros, by civil law, and certainly it cannot have existence under the general despotism of military rule.[26]

Any American war newspaper which did not limit itself to only reporting news would be a danger to the success of the invasion, the Sun argued, adding Taylor's army could not tolerate the "nuisance" of newspaper critics. Otherwise, the Sun pointed out, "Every dissatisfied soldier would rush to its columns to pour out his complaints, parties would be formed, strife engendered, insubordination ensue and the commanding officer soon find himself in an (intolerable) plight...."[27] Regarding Mexican newspapers, the Sun complained of the "pretty free language" they were allowed to use, considering they were operating in "captured cit(ies), governed by martial law."[28] A Washington correspondent of the Sun carried the point further: "That the Mexican press must be crushed every reasonable man will at once understand....We must deprive them of everything that can lend to union of action...."[29]

The Polk Administration's newspaper, the Washington Union, strongly supported this position. It argued that if any American newspaper in Mexico took an anti-war stand it would be the commanding general's duty "to silence such organs of flagrant treason" on grounds they'd be protracting the war by giving "aid and comfort to the enemy." Under martial law, the Union pointed out, such acts against the press were legal.[30]

Another American-operated newspaper was suppressed at Monterey, Mexico in summer 1847. Taylor's army had captured the city the previous September, and the military authorities resisted the establishment of an American newspaper for five months on the grounds it would "be in violation of the wishes of the government at home."[31] Finally, in February, 1847, the military turned over a captured press belonging to the Mexican state of New Leon to a group of American printers.[32] The new paper, American Pioneer, was published by William S. Goff

and J.D. Onslow. A New Orleans printer, Durant da Ponte, was associate editor and publisher.[33] The Pioneer came to an abrupt end the following June (1847) when Major Jubel Early of the Virginia Volunteers, acting military governor, ordered it shut down. A correspondent of the New Orleans Delta explained everything "had gone smoothly until the Pioneer commenced to expose some of the rascally proceedings" of the city's Mexican civil government. The Mexicans immediately demanded that Major Early return their press. "He, in his goal to gain the good-will of the Mexicans, immediately complied," the Delta's correspondent wrote.[34]

At about the same time, early June 1847, the army instituted prior censorship on the American-owned Tampico Sentinel after an editorial by editor John Gibson "gave umbrage" to the area commander, Col. William Gates. Gates established a three-man censorship board "to sanction all matter that may henceforth appear in that paper."[35] It is not clear how long Gates enforced the censorship, but the Sentinel continued intermittently at Tampico until March 1848.[36]

The scene of action next shifted to central Mexico, after Scott landed his invasion army. More strict than Taylor in applying military regulations, Scott issued his highly detailed martial law regulation, titled General Order No. 20.[37] It gave local commanders broad powers, including the power to establish military commissions to try all offenders. Paragraph 11 of the order stated, however, that "any punishment" inflicted by such a commission had to be "in conformity with known punishments, in like cases, in some one of the States of the United States of America." [38]

To its rear, Scott's army left a vulnerable, undermanned communications-supply line. This situation led to the suppression of two more Mexican newspapers, and the harassment of others. At Jalapa, when the American army moved forward in August, 1847, the former office of an American-run paper was taken over by an outspoken Mexican publication, Boletin del Noticias. The threat of American censorship apparently did not scare the Boletin's editor. He even censured Santa Anna's government paper at Mexico City, Diario del Gobierno, for "talking so much about the possibility of peace."[39]

"Intercepted Correspondence" was a standing headline in the Boletin, and was used for printing orders and letters going to and from the American army which the local guerrillas had captured and passed along to the Boletin's editor. He was careful, he explained, not to use all of the intercepted American correspondence, considering it imprudent "lest his sheet should fall into the hands of Americans."[40] The editor showed a compassionate side, too, pleading clemency for intercepted couriers.

But in October (1847) the editor went too far for the American military authorities when he suggested the guerrillas in the nearby mountains should occupy the city and make prisoners of all who were cooperating with the Americans. The American area commander, Colonel F.W. Wynkoop of the Pennsylvania Volunteer Regiment, took a detachment to the paper's office and confiscated its press and type.[41]

An uprising at the city of Puebla in November, 1847 caused the closing of another outspoken Mexican publication. A correspondent of the Delta reported the incident occurred when a Mexican editor in the city, identified as "Senor Don Rivera," published a number of "inflammatory" items "inviting the patriotic

gentlemen of Puebla,...to rise in arms and patriotically cut the throats of the six hundred sick Yankees" in the rear-area garrison.[42] A revolt followed and the American forces had to call in reinforcements to put it down. After the streets were clear, the correspondent wrote, the American commander "very naturally felt anxious to know where his amiable friend Rivera's office was. He sent (a) company to 'purchase' the establishment, together with its proprietor." Rivera got word the troops were coming, however, and escaped before they arrived.[43]

In October, 1847, soon after Scott's army captured Mexico City, the military governor, General John A. Quitman, instituted prior censorship on the capital's Mexican newspapers. James L. Freaner, a correspondent for the New Orleans Delta, explained, "The rebellious and incendiary spirit manifested by some of them, calculated to produce serious trouble between our army and the Mexicans, required the adoption of such a course."[44]

The following month a small Mexico City paper, Judio Erracfe (Wandering Jew), made what the New Orleans Picayune described as "a violent attack on the American army." The next issue of the paper appeared "in skeleton form," the Picayune reported, and included a stern warning from American General Persifor Smith cautioning the editor not to use such language again or face closure. The editor, however, rebutted that "if he could not speak as he wishes he will not speak at all." The statement ended with an explanation to readers that the paper would not publish again.[45]

Another Mexico City editor, V. Garcia Torres of El Monitor Republicano, sustained a beating for his efforts to resist the Americans. When an American army officer escorted a Mexican woman in public, Torres scolded her in his

paper for having "a frolicsome disposition and romantic inclinations," suggested the women of the city censure her, and then urged the "better families" not to cooperate with "the invaders."[46] Freaner reported the editor was tracked down by the officer and "given as severe a cowhiding as any man ever received." Torres complained to the military authorities, Freaner explained, "for redress and made a great ado about the liberty of the press and the extent to which it was tolerated in the United States." The military quickly answered Torres, telling him "editors in the United States had the right to publish what they pleased, but if they violated the laws or insulted the feelings of private individuals they must take the consequences."[47]

Another Mexico City newspaper which the military authorities interfered with was the American-owned North American. Edited by William C. Tobey, a former Philadelphia reporter, the North American came into existence as competition for John Peoples' American Star. The latter handled the army's printing as a result of Gen. Scott's support.[48] For his paper to survive, Tobey asked "a just share" of the army's patronage: "...not a monopoly but a just share is all that is desired."[49] The army's economic support was not forthcoming, however, and in late February, 1848, when President Polk relieved Scott of his Mexico command, the paper was suspended by the military for four days.[50] A week later the North American's ownership was reorganized, but the paper still could not find sufficient patronage, missed a number of publishing dates, and finally closed its doors on March 31, 1848.[51]

Trouble with Mexican civil authorities at Vera Cruz led to the suppression of another American newspaper, the Genius of Liberty. This paper was started September 25, 1847, by Dr. Michael J. Quin and R. C. Mathewson.[52] Part of the

usefulness of the Genius of Liberty, as the Americans in Vera Cruz saw it, was to criticize the operation of the Mexican civilian government in the captured city. The Vera Cruz City Council, appointed and sustained by the American military authorities, particularly bothered the American community since it included some Mexicans who previously had fought against the invaders. When the Genius of Liberty complained about how the council was spending local tax funds, the councilmen attempted to silence the paper by threatening to withhold the city's legal advertising. A correspondent of the New Orleans Delta, expressing outrage over the action, said it was taken because "the editors used the privilege which our glorious Constitution guarantees to all -- even aliens who had taken shelter under our Flag -- the privilege of expressing publicly and fearlessly their opinions of the public acts of public servants."[53]

The council did, however, switch the city's advertising to the Mexican-owned Arco Iris, a paper the New Orleans Delta said "constantly sneers at our government, army and our way of doing things."[54] The disappointed Quin called the editors of the Arco Iris "the avowed enemies of our Republic."[55] The American military governor, Colonel Henry Wilson of the 1st Infantry, did not agree, however, and allowed the council to switch its patronage to the Spanish-language paper.

Quin was soon in more serious trouble with Wilson. Early in November, 1847, the editor criticized the laxness of the Court of Corrections, which was appointed by Wilson. The court, composed of military personnel, summoned Quin and Mathewson before it, and without trial found them guilty of contempt and fined them $200. It also denied their demand to appeal the decision to General Scott. "This raised the dander of Dr. Quin," noted a correspondent of the Delta.[56]

In his next issue Quin wrote a general attack about Wilson's administration of the city. Wilson retaliated by sending a detail of troops to the Genius of Liberty office, closed it and jailed Quin and Mathewson.[57]

Wilson appointed a military commission to study the case, but when it refused to act the governor decided to be the sole judge in the matter. Ruling under the power of martial law, he gave the editors the choice of staying in prison or leaving Mexico immediately. A mob, meanwhile, had entered the unguarded print shop and looted and ransacked it.[58]

With no alternative, Quin and Mathewson left for New Orleans on the next ship. The bitter Quin called his expulsion characteristic "of the good old times, when tyrant tories, stamp act laws and star chamber decrees reigned rampant in the land."[59] If Wilson felt slandered, Quin argued, he had "recourse to moral expedients" and could have appealed to the American community for vindication. Instead, the editor stated, Wilson chose "the physical and savage (expedients) of bayonet, forcible gagging, imprisonment and banishment."[60]

Wilson's action also left the remaining newspapermen in Vera Cruz angry. "Gov. Wilson has renewed the old Alien and Sedition Law of the Elder Adams," the Delta's correspondent complained, continuing, "The President of the United States cannot stop a press there, no matter what it may say of him. Yet this little magistrate down here is capable of exercising a tyranny only the prerogative of despots."[61] Other correspondents derisively referred to the military governor as "Old Mother Wilson" and "The Conqueror of the Genius of Liberty."[62]

Another American paper, described as "much in the style of the Genius of Liberty," soon opened in Vera Cruz. It was called the Free American and was edited and published by F.A. Devilliers, a former New Orleans printer. Like his

predecessors, Devilliers constantly battled with the Mexican civil authorities, but he managed to hold out for more than six months before being suspended. In February, 1848 he fought a duel with Andres Avelino de Orihuela, Cuban editor of the Arco Iris, and was shot in the leg.[63] Early in May (1848) the Mexican mayor of Vera Cruz attempted to prosecute Devilliers in a Mexican court for an item he had published. The American lieutenant governor interceded by writing a strong letter of protest to the mayor and the matter was dropped. "Considerable excitement was created in the American community by the action," the New Orleans Delta reported.[64]

Devilliers' trouble with the American military governor came unexpectedly, and somewhat inexplicably. On June 8, 1848, as the American forces were withdrawing from Mexico following a peace agreement, the paper ran a small item headed, sarcastically, "A Tribute of Respect for the Treaty of Peace, But not the Last." The story, four inches in length, told of the murder of two American stragglers by a band of Mexicans after the main American force had withdrawn from the city of Orizaba. The article, written in the flamboyant ante-bellum style used frequently in the war papers, concluded:

> When our troops heard of the infamous conduct of these cowards, several officers and men begged for revenge, but they were not permitted to chastise the murderers because peace was made and... (the dead men's) blood still cries for vengence. But peace is made![65]

Early the next morning, June 9, Devilliers was awakened by a soldier and handed a note to report immediately to General Persifor F. Smith, the new American governor. On arrival at headquarters, the editor was shown into a room where General Smith was standing with several of the city's Mexican officials. Without any prior explanation the editor was surprised to find

himself being severely reprimanded. "After having been called by names not before given to me," Devilliers complained, "I was ordered to leave the city in 12 hours!"[66]

Summarily dismissed, Devilliers had time only to pack and complete one more issue of the Free American. A final editorial to his "friends and patrons" stated:

> What have I done to be treated so harshly? Have I not always supported my countrymen when they were in the right? Under the administrations of several Commanders of this Department, you all know that no cause of complaint was given by my paper; in fact, that my language was always respectful, and that I ever kept within the bounds of TRUTH.
>
> .....
>
> Difference between an American and a Mexican Newspaper in this Country -- The Mexican papers are allowed to call American soldiers robbers, murderers, etc. etc. An American paper must be silent or die....I still breathe the air which was given to me by the Power of Heaven. How dear is freedom to one who momentarily expects to be deprived of it.[67]

The next day, June 10, Devilliers was taken to the dock under military escort and put on a ship bound for New Orleans. His co-editor, a Cuban who handled the Spanish-language portion of the paper, was kept in prison until June 13 when he too was taken directly to the dock and put on a ship to New Orleans. "It is truly perplexing," observed the Delta's Vera Cruz correspondent, "to see a man who has been for the past twelve months advocating the American cause thus ignominiously thrust out of the country -- a man who cannot speak the first word of (English)."[68]

The suspension of the Free American was the only newspaper closing of the war which drew criticism from the American press. It was mild, however, because General Smith was one of the war's heroes. "We must say that this appears to us rather a summary mode of procedure," the New Orleans Crescent

stated.[69] A New Orleans Delta editorial echoed, "There must be some mistake surely in this, as no American officer... would be guilty of issuing so arbitrary an order on so slight a (sic) pretence."[70] The New Orleans Picayune praised General Smith, but added, "The punishment inflicted on the editor... was quite disproportionate to the offense committed. We can scarcely acquiesce in the exercise of such power save in a critical emergency during war, of which we see no evidence in this case..."[71] Whatever the case for Devilliers it was quickly forgotten, and Smith returned to New Orleans several weeks later to a hero's welcome.

Summary and Conclusions

Correspondents in the Mexican War did not suffer from traditional censorship restraints which occurred in later wars. The army's few attempts to control reports leaving the war zones were directed mostly at military personnel writing letters critical of others in the service. At any rate, the newspaper correspondents do not appear to have caused lasting problems for the military since no permanent censorship apparatus or regulations were instituted.[72]

However, the presence of a large number of American-operated and Mexican newspapers in the war zone provided a unique aspect to censorship during the war. The army, which had not fought in a foreign country previously, had few guidelines to follow. Many of the war papers were not bothered by military authorities because they helped maintain local control, and in a number of instances were supported by the military patronage. When necessary, however, the army commanders do not appear to have been hesitant to use martial law to

silence local press critics. As a result at least five American-operated and five Mexican-operated newspapers were suppressed when military authorities felt they were, to some degree, a threat to local military control. In addition, the army used prior censorship in two instances and occasionally employed economic restraints and even physical threats to help control the war papers. Not all acts of press constraint were recorded, of course, and this paper has only discussed verifiable incidents.

Viewed as a whole, these incidents add reinforcement to Siebert's noted Proposition II: "The area of freedom contracts and the enforcement of restraints increases as the stresses on the stability of the government and the structure of society increase."[73] Also important to the history of press-military relationships was Scott's precedent setting martial law regulations. These rules laid the groundwork for the U.S. military's martial law guidelines of subsequent wars. Overall, the American press enjoyed wide latitude of freedom in its coverage of the Mexican War, but its freedom was not absolute. The energy of the American press in covering the war was to influence future war coverage, but the army's implementation of martial law served as a counterforce to that coverage.

NOTES

1. For discussion of military censorship during the Civil War see Quintus Wilson, "A Study and Evaluation of the Military Censorship in the Civil War" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Minnesota, 1945); Edwin Emery, The Press and America, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972) Chap. 14; Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism, 3rd. ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1962) Chap. XX and J. Cutler Andrew, The North Reports the Civil War (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1955).

2. In general, there is not much historiography about the Mexican War. Some discussion of the military's relationships with civilians during this conflict can be found in Justin H. Smith, The War With Mexico (2 vols., New York: The Macmillan Co., 1919) II:210-32, and Robert Selph Henry, The Story of the Mexican War (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1950) pp. 202-204ff. There are other general histories of the war, but these two are recognized for their scholarship.

3. There are few published works on the role of the American press during the Mexican War; the best are Fayette Copeland, Kendall of the Picayune (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1943) and Thomas Ewing Dabney, One Hundred Great Years; The Story of the Times-Picayune from its Founding to 1940 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1944). Also see Thomas W. Reilly, "American Reporters and the Mexican War, 1846-1848" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1975).

4. The best study of these newspapers is Lota M. Spell, "The Anglo-Saxon Press in Mexico, 1846-1848," American Historical Review, 38 (October 1932) 1:20-31. Also see Robert Louis Bodson, "A Description of the United States Occupation of Mexico as Reported by American Newspapers in Vera Cruz, Puebla, and Mexico City, September 14, 1847, to July 31, 1848" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Ball State University, 1971). Many of the war papers were not bothered by military authorities because they helped the army maintain local control by publishing official decrees and regulations. In a number of instances these papers were supported by military patronage. Of the 25 American-operated war papers, 16 eventually closed their doors because of financial or related problems, five were suppressed by the military and four continued to operate even after the war ended.

5. For examples see Donald L. Shaw and Stephen W. Brauer, "Press Freedom and War Constraints: Case Testing Siebert's Proposition II," Journalism Quarterly 46: 243-54; Charles H. Brown, "Press Censorship in the Spanish-American War," Journalism Quarterly, 42: 363-72; John D. Stevens, "Press and Community Toleration: Wisconsin in World War I," Journalism Quarterly 46:255-59; plus extensive material in Emery, op. cit., Chaps. 14, 24; additionally, important material in two studies by Mary Ann Yodelis, "Courts, Counting House and Streets: Attempts at Press Control, 1763-1775," Journalism History 1 (Spring 1974) 1:11-15, and "The Press in Wartime: Portable and Penurious," Journalism History 3 (Spring 1976) 1:2-6, 10. Also related to this topic is Fredrick S. Siebert, Freedom of the Press in England 1476-1776 (Urbana, Ill., 1952). Siebert's noted Proposition II "The area of freedom contracts and the enforcement of restraints increases as the stresses on the stability of the government and the structure of society increase," best fits the Mexican War press experience.

6. Smith, op. cit., II: 210-32.

7. See Ralph H. Gabriel, "American Experience with Military Government," American Historical Review, XLIX (July 1944) 4:630-43.

8. Ibid., p. 633; Smith, op. cit., II:210-32; Henry, op. cit., pp. 202-204.

9. Gabriel, op. cit., p. 634.

10. Henry, op. cit., pp. 202-205. The Polk Administration was hesitant to give a military commander authority over civilian affairs, even in a foreign country, but finally provided Scott limited support. Members of Congress expressed the same reservations, and took no legal action to implement the general's ideas. Scott, believing a good civil affairs plan was needed for his Mexican military campaign to succeed, went ahead with the regulations on his own; events proved him correct. For Scott's explanation see Winfield Scott, Memoirs (2 vols. New York: Sheldon & Co., 1864) II:392-96.

11. Gabriel, op. cit., p. 635.

12. Philadelphia Public Ledger, July 29, 1846. The Mexican government imposed press censorship throughout most of the war.

13. Quoted in New Orleans Picayune, July 26, 1846.

14. Ibid.

15. Charleston Courier, August 1, 1846.

16. New Orleans Picayune, July 26, 1846; St. Louis Reveille, August 4, 1846.

17. Spell, op. cit., p. 22; for biographical information on the three owners see Walter Prescott Webb, editor-in-chief, The Handbook of Texas, (2 vol., Austin: The Texas State Historical Association, 1952) I:521, 610, II:121.

18. New Orleans Delta, September 9, 1846; Spell, op. cit., p. 22. The strongly pro-Whig New Orleans Tropic attributed political motives to Polk's decision to close the paper, stating, "The influence of Senator (Sam) Houston (of Texas) over Mr. Polk is assigned as the reason for this order. General McLeod is a political enemy of Mr. Houston and belonged to the Lamar faction, by which Houston was opposed during the (Texas Republic)." New Orleans Tropic, July 11, 1846, quoted in the St. Louis Missouri Republican, July 18, 1846. A letter from an American correspondent at Vera Cruz to the New York Herald (April 28, 1847) contended the Mexican government tried to make a truce with Taylor by ceding Mexico's northern states to the United States; "General Taylor, however, refused to listen to these propositions of peace and suppressed the Republic of the Rio Grande ... for ... advocating the proposed republic...." There is no explanation of Taylor's actions in his general and special orders: Orders of General Zachary Taylor to the Army of Occupation in the Mexican War, 1845-1847. The Adjutant General's Office of the War Department, National Archives.

19. Matamoros American Flag, August 23, 1846, quoted in Charleston Courier, September 3, 1846.

20. Philadelphia Public Ledger, July 25, 1846.

21. Spell, op. cit., p. 30.

22. Ibid., p. 23; Matamoros Reveille, June 24, 1846.

23. Taylor was lax in enforcing martial law, usually making judgments on liberal interpretations of his orders from Washington. See Smith, op. cit., II: 210-215.

24. St. Louis Reveille, August 20, 1846.

25. New Orleans Bee, August 8, 1846, quoted in St. Louis Missouri Republican, August 17, 1846.

26. Baltimore Sun, August 19, 1846. Also see the Philadelphia Public Ledger, August 19, 1846, for a mild comment on the matter.

27. Baltimore Sun, August 19, 1846.

28. Ibid., October 4, 1847.

29. Ibid., October 9, 1847.

30. Washington Union, May 27, 1847.

31. New Orleans Delta, November 3, 1846.

32. Ibid., July 6, 1847.

33. Spell, op. cit., p. 24.

34. New Orleans Delta, July 6, 1847.

35. New York Herald, July 1, 1847.

36. Gibson had formerly edited the New Orleans True American, a Native American Party publication. He was in Tampico as clerk of the American court there. He died in the Mexican city in October 1847, but the paper continued publishing under other owners. New Orleans Delta, June 19, July 15, September 14, November 10, 1847, and March 30, 1848; New Orleans Picayune, November 9, 1847.

37. Full title of the order was Headquarters of the Army, Tampico, February 19, 1847, General Orders No. 20. See Smith, op. cit., II: 210-220, 455-456.

38. Ibid., II:456.

39. Jalapa (Mexico) Boletin del Noticias, August 3, 1847, quoted in New Orleans Picayune, August 31, 1847.

40. Boletin del Noticias, August 13, 1847, quoted in New Orleans Picayune, August 31, 1847.

41. New Orleans Delta, November 9, 1847.

42. Ibid., November 20, 1847.

43. Ibid.

44. Quoted in the Baltimore Sun, November 20, 1847. The Americans occupied Mexico City on September 14, 1847, and immediately restored press freedom. Within three weeks seven Spanish and French language newspapers and two American-owned newspapers were operating. St. Louis Missouri Republican, November 19, 1847.

45. New Orleans Picayune, December 19, 1847.

46. New Orleans Delta, November 6, 1847.

47. Ibid. Torres' spirit was not broken by the assault, and he continued to feud with the American newspaper editors throughout the occupation of Mexico City. On another occasion General Quitman, the military governor, sent a note to Torres directing him to provide proof of "various outrages (you relate are) committed by patrols and soldiers of the army" or "you will be held responsible for libels against the army." St. Louis Missouri Republican, November 15, 1847.

48. Bodson, op. cit., Chap. 5; Reilly, op. cit., Chap. 17. There was strong political influence and purpose behind the two papers; the American Star was pro-Scott and pro-Whig. The North American was pro-Democrat. The American Star was able to hold onto the army's printing even after Polk relieved Scott of his command, and as a result outlived its competitor by two months, surviving almost until the army withdrew from Mexico City.

49. Bodson, op. cit., p. 17.

50. Ibid., pp. 18-19. Copeland, op. cit., p. 226, suggests the paper was closed for criticizing the delayed arrival of the army courier carrying the orders to relieve Scott.

51. Spell, op. cit., p. 27.

52. New Orleans Picayune, October 5, 1847; Spell, op. cit., p. 29. Spell spells Quin with two n's. Contemporary newspapers, however, spelled it with one. See New Orleans Delta, January 8, 1848, for a signed notice by Quin, using one n. Another Vera Cruz paper, the Sol de Anahuac operated by F.A. Devilliers and R. Valdez Alfonso from the same shop as the new Genius of Liberty, had ended publication only five days before the Genius opened. The reason for its closing is not clear. A letter from New Orleans Picayune correspondent D. Scully said simply "the paper has been suspended." (Picayune, October 5, 1847). The Genius of Liberty later implied there was trouble between the American Devilliers and the Mexican Alfonso. Quoted in Bodson, op. cit., p. 2.

53. New Orleans Delta, November 7, 1847.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid., January 8, 1848.

56. Ibid., November 25, 1847.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid., January 8, 1848.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid., November 25, 1847.

62. Ibid., May 23, 1848.

63. Ibid., March 8, 12, 1848. The anti-American Arco Iris was the Free American's bitter competitor for news and advertising.

64. Ibid., May 19, 1848.

65. Vera Cruz Free America, June 8, 1848, quoted in New Orleans Delta, June 16, 1848.

66. New Orleans Crescent, June 16, 1848.

67. Vera Cruz Free American, June 9, 1848, quoted in New Orleans Crescent, June 16, 1848.

68. New Orleans Delta, June 22, 1848.

69. New Orleans Crescent, June 16, 1848.

70. New Orleans Delta, June 16, 1848.

71. New Orleans Picayune, June 16, 1848.

72. There is evidence of only one case of the military authorities interfering with the civilian correspondents writing to American newspapers. In August, 1847, Colonel William Gates, army commander at Tampico, ordered all correspondence, whether by military personnel or civilians, to first be cleared by his office. (New Orleans Picayune, August 1, 1847). Gates was particularly upset by a report in the Picayune (July 17, 1847) which stated some troops from Tampico had "to retreat" during an engagement with Mexican forces. Although Gates enforced the regulation for some time (New York Herald, August 25, 1847) there is no evidence in a thorough reading of the Picayune from August, 1847 until the American evacuation of Tampico in August, 1848, that he prevented the correspondents' coverage.

73. See note 5 above.